



HECKMONDWIKE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

PDR/JDN

16 October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach the end of the half term, I would like to take the opportunity to update you on a few things:

Covid Protocols

Firstly, a real thank you for your understanding with respect to groups of students needing to self-isolate at home when we have had a confirmed positive Covid test result. As you will appreciate, we have very robust protocols in school to keep year groups separate, yet still give all students access to specialist rooms and facilities in school. When we have received notification of a positive case, we are able to very quickly identify which students have been in close contact and so only have to isolate the minimum number. In all of these cases, we follow statutory guidance from national and local authorities and really don't have any choice in the matter other than, because of our protocols we can keep the numbers affected to a minimum. We continue to provide the highest quality learning experiences for those students at home and are moving towards more lessons being taught 'live'. Further guidance about this will be sent to you in the very near future.

One problem we have identified, is school being informed of a positive case, when the school is closed, i.e. overnight, at the weekend or indeed during a holiday. Therefore, you will now see there is a [form](#) on the homepage of website that allows parents to notify us, whatever the time of day, such that we can make urgent arrangements to isolate students, possibly before students enter the building the following day. As you will appreciate, it is paramount we are informed as soon as possible and students who are exhibiting symptoms stay at home until the situation has been resolved with a test result.

Closure Days

Next week, as you are aware, school is closed on Monday the 19th for the entrance examination and again on Friday, the 23rd for a training day. We are categorising these days as 'Academic Reading/Research Days' whereby work will be set by teachers so as to keep learning progressing and not miss any more time, but the work will largely be of a nature

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Headteacher: Mr P Roberts

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which is less pressured for the students and so will give them some well-earned respite from their normal routine.

Sixth Form Open Evening

You may be aware that next Thursday, the 22nd was to be our Sixth Form Open Evening. I'm sure you will not be surprised that the format of this has had to change and the evening will be a virtual event, accessible via the school website. Whatever the age of your children, I encourage you to take a look and see what life in the sixth form looks like, I'm sure you will be impressed. For our students currently in year 11, by way of removing a large anxiety about their place in the sixth form in a very disrupted year, please take this letter as formal notice that we will be guaranteeing a place for every student, whatever their results next year. Whilst we expect our students to do exceptionally well next summer as in all previous years, we hope this removes some uncertainty about their future. This is not to say that our year 11 students don't need to work hard! There will still be entry requirements for each course and it is very important to achieve the best grades possible in all subjects to maximise university and career progression opportunities.

GCSE and A Level Exams 2021

You may have seen the government have announced GCSE and A Level exams will be delayed next summer. We understand there will be a GCSE Mathematics and a GCSE English exam before the half-term holiday, with all other exams after the break running up to the first week in July. A level results will be published on the 24th of August 2021 with GCSEs on the 27th. Please do bear these dates in mind when booking holidays. This is the link to all the details: [Common Timetable](#).

And finally, it has been an extraordinary first half-term for us all. But we are all used to operating in these very unusual circumstances and as we have always done at HGS we have done our absolute best and made the most out of the situation we have all found ourselves in. Our students, your children, have been exceptional and are a real credit to themselves and you. They have conducted themselves in an exemplary way, adhering to the new protocols, but nevertheless enjoying themselves, learning a lot and upholding the school's values in everything they do. Similarly, we could not do what we do without your unerring support, and despite the difficult decisions we find ourselves making, it is always gratifying to know we have your understanding and we continue to operate very well as a team. My final thanks go to the staff. Your children deserve the best and I can assure you, they get the best. Their professionalism through all the anxiety of working in such a busy environment, often coupled to juggling personal commitments associated with the pandemic, has been excellent. They work so hard to give your children the best education they can, and just like the students, I am very proud of them.

Whatever, your plans over the school break I do hope you manage to get some quality family time and get some time to rest and relax.

My continued best wishes to you all.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peter Roberts". The signature is written in black ink and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Peter Roberts

Headteacher

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